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Senate

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, who locked the oceans in their vast reservoirs, we honor Your glorious Name.

Lord, Your power has sustained our Nation in the past, and we place our future in Your hands. Each day we are inspired by the splendor of Your holiness. We see Your handiwork in the glory of the sunrise and the majesty of the sunset.

Lord, continue to rule in the lives of our lawmakers. Do not turn a deaf ear to their prayers, as they seek to do Your will. Be for them their strength and shield during these challenging days. May they continue to find in You a future and a hope.

We pray in Your amazing Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 21, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNOCK thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, yesterday, Speaker PELOSI and I put in motion the path to pass a continuing resolution that in one fell swoop would accomplish four very important things. It would keep the government open through December 3 of this year and avoid a needless and dangerous shutdown. It would provide emergency funding to help resettle Afghan evacuees; it would approve tens of billions of dollars in disaster aid funding; and it will suspend the debt ceiling until December of 2022, commensurate with the time necessary to cover the debt of the bipartisan \$908 billion emergency COVID-relief bill passed at the end of last year.

Now, today, I want to spend some time focusing on the last of these items, addressing the debt limit to avoid a first-ever default in American history.

Throughout modern history, addressing the debt ceiling has consistently been done on a bipartisan basis. Let me repeat that. Throughout modern history, addressing the debt ceiling has consistently been done on a bipartisan basis. Since 1960, the debt ceiling has been raised approximately 80 times under both Republican and Democratic administrations and under both unified and divided government. So much for

the argument by Leader MCCONNELL that when all three branches are controlled by one party, the debt ceiling ought to be their exclusive domain. That is not what history has shown, and that is not what happened actually in 2017 when Donald Trump was President, MCCONNELL was majority leader, and MCCARTHY was Republican Speaker—I believe it was MCCARTHY back then—but the debt ceiling was renewed bipartisan.

To do otherwise, to not do the debt ceiling in a bipartisan way, has been considered unthinkable because the consequences for the economy, for the American people, and for our standing on the world stage would be too severe.

Senate Republicans and the Republican leader, however, are again engaging in fantastical feats of sophistry to justify why this time is somehow different. We know it is not. We all know the truth. Democrats and Republicans both had a hand in approving the spending we now must pay.

Look, we know the Republican justification for forcing a default is totally dishonest, plain and simple. Don't ask me; just listen to the Wall Street Journal. Here is what it said:

Congress would still need to raise the debt limit this fall even if no new major spending programs were enacted.

This idea that they don't want to raise the debt ceiling to deal with future spending is just totally false. Ask the Wall Street Journal.

The fact is, our continuing resolution would suspend the debt limit through December of 2022, an amount of time commensurate with the debt incurred as a result of passing the bipartisan \$908 billion emergency COVID relief legislation in December of last year. Remember, that legislation was drafted by Republicans, voted for by Republicans, and put on the floor by Leader MCCONNELL, who voted for it, and signed by a Republican President. Democrats worked with our colleagues to pass this bill because it was the right thing to do for our families, our

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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